

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUXEMB 00346 290655Z

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6314

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

UNCLAS LUXEMBOURG 0346

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG, LU

SUBJ: GOL MINISTER ON ENERGY CRISIS

1. GOL MINISTER OF ENERGY JOSY BARTHEL, VISITING FSO KEMPTON JENKINS OF THE SENIOR SEMINAR (SEE STATE 048889) AND ECON OFFICER JOHN RILEY MET ON MARCH 21 TO DISCUSS U.S. ENERGY POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL ENERGY ISSUES. MINISTER BARTHEL MADE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

2. BARTHEL SAID EUROPEANS ARE NOT AWARE THAT AN EVEN MORE SERIOUS ENERGY CRISIS MAY BE ON THE HORIZON. THE ECONOMIC RECESSION IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD HAS TEMPORARILY REDUCED ENERGY DEMAND AND THEREBY POSTPONED THE DAY OF RECKONING. EUROPEANS ADMITTEDLY PAY MORE FOR THEIR ENERGY THAN AMERICANS, PARTICULARLY GASOLINE FOR AUTOMOBILES, BUT THEIR HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING MAKES THIS COST TOLERABLE AND HAS NOT PRODUCED AN ENERGY CRISIS MENTALITY. THEY ARE NOT AWARE OF THE REAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HARDSHIPS THAT MAY BE IN STORE FOR EUROPE IN THE 1980S IF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY ARE NOT FORTH-COMING.

3. MINISTER BARTHEL STRONGLY SUPPORTS NUCLEAR POWER

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PAGE 02 LUXEMB 00346 290655Z

AND VOICED HIS FRUSTRATION AT EFFORTS TO CHECK THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ENERGY SOURCE. LUXEMBOURG'S ONE NUCLEAR PLANT PROJECT IS NOW IN LIMBO (SEE 77 LUXEMBOURG 1065). AS A RESULT, THE GOL IS INVESTIGATING ALTERNATE SOURCES OF ENERGY. BARTHEL MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN HIS VIEW NUCLEAR POWER IS THE FUTURE ENERGY SOURCE PAR EXCELLENCE AND THE BEST GUARANTEE OF

ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

4. MR. JENKINS SAID THAT IN THE UNITED STATES IMPORTANT ECONOMIES HAVE BEEN REGISTERED IN SUCH FIELDS AS AUTO-MOBILE SPEED LIMITS AND MILEAGE, HOME INSULATIONS, INDUSTRIAL RE-EQUIPMENT AND SO FORTH. MINISTER BARTHEL ADMITTED THAT INFORMATION ON ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES AND SUCCESSES IN THE UNITED STATES IS WOEFULLY LAKING IN EUROPE. THE GOALS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S ENERGY POLICY HAVE BEEN WELL KNOWN FOR A YEAR, BUT EUROPEANS ARE WAITING FOR RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS. EUROPE LOOKS TO THE UNITED STATES FOR LEADERSHIP IN DEFINING ENERGY POLICY FOR THE ADVANCED INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD AND HOPES TO DRAW UPON U.S. EXPERIENCE AND EXAMPLE. UNTIL NOW, HOWEVER, EUROPE IS ONLY AWARE OF DELAYS IN PASSAGE OF ENERGY LEGISLATION AND IS QUITE IGNORANT OF U.S. ACCOMPLISHMENTS. BARTHEL URGED THAT EFFORTS BE MADE BY THE USG TO PUBLICIZE ITS ENERGY SUCCESSES. LOWENSTEIN

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